

REMARKS

The last Office Action of May 6, 2005 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration of the instant application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been canceled. Claims 2, 3, 4, 11, 13 have been amended. No claims have been added. A total of 17 claims are now on file. No amendment to the specification has been made. No fee is due.

It is noted that claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,273,241 to Bonnet.

It is noted with appreciation that claims 3, 5 and 7-18 are indicated allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In view of the Examiner's grounds for rejection, applicant has canceled original claim 1 and has rewritten claims 3 and 11 in independent form, as suggested by the Examiner, who indicated that originally filed claims 3 and 11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 2, 4, 12 and 13 have been amended to change or correct their dependency. Claim 2 has also been

amended to provide consistency with the subject matter of claim 3 from which it is dependent.

It is noted that the amendments to claims 3 and 11 do not include the subject matter of claim 2 from which original claims 3 and 11 were previously dependent. It is applicant's contention that to include the subject matter of claim 2 would not properly define the full scope of what the inventors have invented in view of the prior art of record. Accordingly, it is applicant's contention that claims 3 and 11 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 2, 4-10, which depend from claim 3 and therefore contain all the limitations thereof, and claims 12-18, which depend from claim 3 and therefore contain all the limitations thereof, are patentably distinguished over the prior art in the same manner as claims 3 and 11, respectively.

Applicant has also carefully scrutinized the further cited prior art and finds it without any relevance to the newly submitted claims. It is thus felt that no specific discussion thereof is necessary.

In view of the above presented remarks and amendments, it is respectfully submitted that all claims on file should be considered patentably differentiated over the art and should be allowed.

Applicant further submits a certified copy of each of the priority documents under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d).

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner consider necessary or desirable any formal changes anywhere in the specification, claims and/or drawing, then it is respectfully requested that such changes be made by Examiner's Amendment, if the Examiner feels this would facilitate passage of the case to issuance. If the Examiner feels that it might be helpful in advancing this case by calling the undersigned, applicant would greatly appreciate such a telephone interview.

Respectfully submitted,

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